

OUR COMMUNITY matters



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Where not-for-profits go for help

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Our Community Matters is your free community sector update, brought to you by **Our Community** – Australia's centre for excellence for the nation's 600,000 not-for-profits and schools, providing advice, tools, resources and training.

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Inside:

- Nepal in Need ... 2
- Not-for-profit Finance Week ... 3
- Good Reads: Peter Singer ... 3
- Think Differently: Communities in Control ... 4
- Taxing Terms for NFPs in Tax Discussion Paper ... 5
- Need to Know: Your Two-minute NFP News Digest ... 6
- (Almost) Freebies ... 6
- The Numbers Game: ACNC Blacklist Analysis ... 7
- Ticks for Health, Education: 2015 Social Progress Index ... 8
- Better Data Key to Success of Competition Policy in Human Services: Report ... 9
- How to Measure What Matters ... 10
- Not-for-Profit Treasurers' Awards Provide Wisdom and Inspiration ... 10
- Equality on Boards: Are We There Yet? ... 11
- Happy Anniversary, Privacy Laws ... 12
- Readership Survey ... 12
- Co-ops and Mutuals Inquiry: Deadline Extended ... 13
- Blogs We Love: Nonprofit with Balls ... 13
- Our Community Named among World's Best Businesses for Community Impact ... 14
- Australian Institute of Grants Management Website – Now with Added Additives ... 14
- Disadvantaged Schools Eligible for Tax-deductible Donations via New Channel ... 15
- Electronic Super Processing: Are You on Track? ... 15
- Upskill: Upcoming Training and Events ... 16
- Community Calendar: What's on in the NFP Sector ... 18
- Calendar Sidebar: Publicise Your Event ... 18
- Board Matching Service ... 19
- Good Moves: Not-for-profit Jobs ... 19



Go ahead, Greenpeace, make my day

By Denis Moriarty, Group Managing Director, Our Community

The House of Representatives Environment Committee has launched an inquiry into the "administration, transparency and effectiveness" of the [official register](#) of environmental groups that hold tax-deductible status – groups such as Greenpeace, WWF and Clean Up Australia. →

And the government used to be so dewy-eyed and trusting. As Kevin Andrews, the last minister responsible for the voluntary sector, put it when he [addressed](#) a conference called Building Partnerships Between Government and Not-for-profits in 2014, “We believe Australia’s charitable and not-for-profit sector is composed of good people doing good things for their communities on a voluntary basis.”

That was why the Liberal–National government was opposed to the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) – it was too pushy and too sceptical.

“Rather than the regulatory approach of the ACNC that is coercive by definition, we believe these good people deserve a rebuttable presumption of virtue that minimises the intrusion of government into their affairs,” Minister Andrews said. “We hold that government is neither omniscient nor omnipotent and that you’ll always know how to do your business better than we do. So the best thing we can do is to get the regulators off your backs and out of the way to the maximal extent possible.”

When in opposition, the Coalition supported the Not-for-profit Sector Freedom to Advocate Bill. Later, while in government, when it moved a bill to abolish the ACNC, it was because, in the [words](#) of MP Alex Hawke, “The point of having charities and not-for-profits is that they act in a fashion that is different to the government... That is why we have a deductible gift recipient status regime...”

Well, the abolition of the ACNC was such an obvious non-starter that the Bill didn’t even make it to the Senate. The government was frustrated, not to say cranky, and now it seems that last year’s atmosphere of trust and love has been waved away as so much hippie pot smoke.

The new enquiry follows on from strongly expressed views from Liberal backbenchers such as Andrew Nikolich, who last year called for environmental charities to be [stripped of their charitable rights](#) and set apart from “real charities” such as the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. Fellow Coalition MP George Christensen has said some green groups were “terrorists” and [guilty of treason](#).

The government’s old idea that not-for-profits were virtuous doesn’t seem to be resonating quite so loudly for it now, and Minister Andrews’ idea that “the best thing we can do is to get the regulators off your backs and out of the way” has gone the way of its GP co-payment.

Many Liberals now want to bring the regulator back, in full Dirty Harry mode – “I know what you’re thinking. Has he got six votes in the Senate, or only five? Well to tell you the truth, in all this excitement I kinda lost track myself. So you’ve got to ask yourself one question: Do you feel lucky, Greenpeace? Well, do ya, punk?”

Alex Hawke, now chair of the Environment Committee, defends the inquiry by saying, “Most people want to see greater scrutiny and transparency among government-funded entities.”

Wait a moment – does taking a tax break now make you government-funded? What happened to all that praise for the independence of the sector from government coercion?

Hawke says that it’s important that money is spent the way donors want it spent. Does he really think that people who give money to WWF believe it’ll be spent on weeding nature strips? No, they hope it’ll be spent calling the government to account and lobbying for greater protection for the Great Barrier Reef.

It’s not clear what the government hopes to achieve. It’s not illegal to be a vigorous advocate for a position, and it doesn’t stop you being entitled to tax deductibility – the High Court made that inconveniently clear in the [AidWatch case](#). To roll that back, the government would have to write a new law and get it through the Senate, which seems a tall order.

The inquiry, irritating and time-consuming though it will probably be, may just be a sop to the true believers. Here’s hoping.

To read the inquiry’s terms of reference and make a submission, go to [www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary Business/Committees/House/Environment/REO/Terms of Reference](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Environment/REO/Terms_of_Reference). Submissions close on Thursday May 21.

Nepal in need

In the wake of the 7.9-magnitude earthquake that hit Nepal on April 25, the country needs all the help it can get. Many Nepalese are homeless and in desperate need of food and shelter. Aid agencies warn of the dangers of waterborne and infectious diseases.

Many of us feel the need to provide hands-on assistance, but disaster experts recommend that the best way to help is to give money.

See this article for a great rundown on what not to do for Nepal: http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/apr/27/earthquake-nepal-dont-rush-help-volunteers-aid?CMP=soc_567

You can help Nepal now by making a donation to [Plan International Australia](#).

Another option is to donate to GiveNow Help Later, an appeal set up by the Our Community Foundation. GiveNow Help Later focuses on helping community organisations that help communities ruptured by disaster – long after the disaster has occurred. We believe a belated injection of funds could make all the difference to their recovery.

Donate now to [GiveNow Help Later](#).

Next week is Not-for-profit Finance Week

Not-for-profit Finance Week is a celebration of ideas, knowledge and financial capacity-building for the \$100 billion Australian not-for-profit sector. The aim of this annual event is to increase the profile of the not-for-profit sector, bolster the financial capacity and sustainability of the sector, and provide support for the staff, board members and treasurers carrying out the important task of overseeing the finances.

An initiative of Our Community and Commonwealth Bank Not-for-Profit Sector Banking, Not-for-profit Finance Week runs next week from May 11 to May 15.

Free seminars and webinars will be offered during the week, alongside the release of a range of new financial

literacy resources. Learn how to protect your organisation against fraud, raise more money and celebrate your treasurer – and find out how the 2015 federal budget affects your group.

[Visit the website](#) to find out how you can get involved.



Coming soon: results from Australia's most comprehensive ever not-for-profit finance survey

The inaugural Not-for-Profit Finance Survey has closed and the numbers are currently being crunched.

Some fascinating stats are emerging about the financial capacities and governance standards of the sector.

We also have some interesting numbers about mergers, outcomes reporting, fraud and cyber-security risks, current and emerging challenges, and directions.

More than 800 people took part in the survey, making it one of the most comprehensive surveys of not-for-profit finance ever undertaken in Australia. The results will have profound implications for anyone with an interest in understanding the sector, responding to the challenges it faces, and planning for the future.

The survey was run by Our Community and Commonwealth Bank Not-for-Profit Sector Banking. We'll be releasing some key stats during [Not-for-profit Finance Week](#), which runs next week from May 11 to May 15.



GOOD READS



“The Most Good You Can Do”

Australian philosopher Peter Singer's latest book, [The Most Good You Can Do](#), examines the social movement known as effective altruism. “Effective altruism” refers to charitable giving that is underpinned by evidence, and that supports actions or causes that will – empirically – bring about the greatest positive impact.

“It would be good to see the data upon which [decisions about aid projects, for example] are made. Preferably, there would be independent evaluations of those projects,” [Singer told The Guardian](#). “I’m hoping the word gets around that if you do this, do it well, you’ll get money, and organisations not providing the data won’t be on recommended lists. In a way I’m looking to shame organisations.”

Singer said he would like people to ask themselves whether they have done something significant to make the world a better place. “That could be through reducing animal suffering, reducing the risk of catastrophic disasters by acting on climate change, or dealing with an epidemic. Whatever you’re doing, you need to make sure it’s as effective as possible.”

Order the book or read excerpts from it here: www.textpublishing.com.au/previews/the-most-good-you-can-do.

Think differently: Communities in Control

Conference, Melbourne, May 25–26. [Register now.](#)

Think differently, Steve Jobs taught us, wearing the same style black turtleneck every day of his adult life. Some things need to change, some things can stay the same. The trick is to pick which is which.

Somewhere out there is a future with your community's name on it. Are you ready for it? Your mission, your style of governance, your fundraising and marketing and technology strategies, your budget – how responsive are you to changes in Australian society? Will your organisation still be here in 25 years, or will you have been crushed against the barriers by overtaking movements?

If you're not interested in the future, the future may not be interested in you. There are no guarantees. Today's rooster is tomorrow's feather duster, and the same thing goes for doves and peacocks and owls. You've got to keep the golden eggs coming, only better – double-yolkers, and organic. You have to think differently.

One trouble with doing good, though, is that it keeps you busy, sometimes until you drop in your tracks. Against some tough competition, time to think is the scarcest of your resources. Look at this year's strategy: how many hours have you set aside for just thinking?

Sometimes you're also too busy to listen. The springs of organisational innovation are diversity, flexibility, and responsiveness. In your organisation, do you make room for that? Do ideas come up the hierarchy, or do you work from the top down?

You need time to reflect too. When did you last take time out to reflect on what your organisation is doing well, and what it could do better? What's the reception for people pointing out your missteps, mistakes, and failures? Australian not-for-profits are generally underfunded, overworked, and afraid – afraid that any admission of error will lead to their being even more underfunded and so even more overworked.

You can't ever stop changing and adapting. Every advance creates new expectations. And you can't work in isolation. Steve Jobs couldn't have done it on his own. He needed Silicon Valley, a wide-open centre dedicated to continuous improvement, where everyone cares about measurable outcomes. It's not a mindset that the Australian not-for-profit sector is noted for, yet. But we're building it.

Communities in Control is about clearing out a time to be open to the future. To take the long view, and the high ground, and the red pill.

For a couple of days, see what it means to think differently. See how your community group can change.

[Register now](#) for Communities in Control, Melbourne, Monday May 25–Tuesday May 26.

Our Community Presents:

This year's Communities in Control conference features our best line-up of international and local speakers yet, from the man who defended Guantanamo detainee David Hicks to the rock-star economist who defies all the stereotypes. You can download the full program from www.ourcommunity.com.au/files/cic2015.pdf. Here's a snapshot of just some of the speakers:

- Lieutenant Colonel USMC (Retired) Dan Mori, former US Marine Corps lawyer, social justice consultant: Joan Kirner Social Justice Oration
- Helena Norberg-Hodge (international guest), filmmaker, author, environmentalist; founder and director, International Society for Ecology and Culture: 'Going local: the economics of happiness'
- Stephen Koukoulas, economic visionary and advisor; Managing Director, Market Economics: 'Why dumb economics is killing our communities'
- Clementine Ford, author, social commentator, equal rights campaigner: 'Empowerment is a zero sum game'
- Dr Jim Diers (international guest), author, lecturer, community enthusiast: 'Whatever the question, community is the answer'
- Alan Crabbe, Pozible co-founder and director: 'Crossing the electronic frontier – or straddling the electric fence'
- Associate Professor Adam Alter (international guest), marketing and psychology guru: 'Drunk Tank Pink: Communities are better when individuals are generous'
- Denise Scott, comedian, actor: 'Laughing just to keep from crying'
- Dr Gregory Phillips, lecturer in Aboriginal health; Executive Director, ABSTARR Consulting: 'An Aboriginal Australian republic'
- Hugh Mackay AO, psychologist, social researcher, author: 'The art of belonging'

Places at Communities in Control are filling fast – [click here](#) to secure yours.

Taxing terms for NFPs in tax discussion paper

The federal government's recently launched [tax discussion paper](#) outlines the tax concessions currently available to different types of NFPs and challenges the sector to justify its "competitive advantage."

"Recognising the wider benefits of NFP activity (particularly where an NFP provides services that for-profit private sector organisations do not)... tax concessions arguably help to both improve societal outcomes and ensure that the overall level of activity in the NFP sector is closer to optimal," it says.

"Notwithstanding this, it is important to assess their effectiveness to ensure that the concessions continue to meet their intended policy objectives, do not result in unintended consequences (such as high compliance costs or an uncompetitive advantage) and deliver the greatest possible community benefit. This is particularly important considering the revenue forgone as a result of these tax concessions. NFP tax concessions result in significant revenue forgone... The amount of revenue forgone from these concessions has been increasing, particularly the FBT exemptions."

The government is seeking submissions on the issues raised in the discussion paper, and it frames four questions for the sector:

47. Are the current tax arrangements for the NFP sector appropriate? Why or why not?
48. To what extent do the tax arrangements for the NFP sector raise particular concerns about competitive advantage compared to the tax arrangements for for-profit organisations?

49. What, if any, administrative arrangements could be simplified that would result in similar outcomes, but with reduced compliance costs?
50. What, if any, changes could be made to the current tax arrangements for the NFP sector that would enable the sector to deliver benefits to the Australian community more efficiently or effectively?

Tell the government what your not-for-profit needs from the tax system. Submissions close on Monday June 1 and can be lodged via <http://bettertax.gov.au/>.



NEED TO KNOW: Your Two-Minute NFP News Digest

Sector without a plan

“It is almost inconceivable that a sector employing over a million Australians has no future planning or industry goals.”

– *Owning Our Future* report

The Community Council for Australia calls on government to work with the not-for-profit sector to develop a “future blueprint” to set out agreed targets and direction, help ensure its sustainability and maximise its contribution. Its report *Owning Our Future*, the first in a series, makes 19 recommendations about asset utilisation.

→ [Full story](#)

Social investment lessons

“Australia has a real opportunity to learn from the UK social investment market. We have an opportunity to learn from and replicate things that went well. We also have a precious opportunity to correct some of the things that didn’t go so well, rather than repeat the mistakes.”

– Emma Tomkinson

The social impact analyst says a [new report](#) by the UK’s Alternative Commission on Social Investment contains important lessons for Australia. For example, she says on her website, investors should be more transparent about how social value is accounted for within their investments.

→ [Full story](#)

Last warning

“We have extended the due date for these charities a number of times, and there will be no further extensions. If double defaulter charities do not file within 28 days, they will have their charity status revoked”

– Susan Pascoe

The ACNC Commissioner urges not-for-profits to submit outstanding Annual Information Statements as the charity regulator prepares to revoke the charitable status of 6000 groups that haven’t completed their statements for two years running. → [Full story](#)

Scam!

“No. None of it’s true.”

– Belle Gibson

The fallen health food “guru” and charity fundraiser admits she lied about having a brain tumour. Gibson invented a “miracle cure” story to promote her blog and app The Whole Pantry. Consumer Affairs Victoria is looking into the whereabouts of hundreds of thousands of dollars of donations Ms Gibson had raised for charity.

→ [Full story](#)

Experimental philanthropy

“Some still see philanthropy as an alternative to government. I see it as a way to embolden government.”

– Michael Bloomberg

The high-profile US philanthropist argues that philanthropy can spur policy change by making it easier for governments to take risks and experiment with new models that, owing to budget constraints, otherwise wouldn’t be implemented.

→ [Full story](#)

Beep, beep, beep: government reverses

“I can say to you it’s not a priority for us to proceed with that at this time.”

Assistant Treasurer Josh Frydenberg continues the Federal Government’s backdown on plans to abolish the ACNC, telling a gathering of NFPs in Canberra that it is no longer a priority.

→ [Full story](#)

Who do you trust?

“Community leaders were judged as the most trustworthy of the five sectors of leaders we examined: 81% thought community leaders were somewhat or very trustworthy.”

– Swinburne Leadership Survey report

The Swinburne Leadership Survey for 2014–15 finds that community and NFP leaders are seen as trustworthy, competent and caring more about the public interest than self-interest.

→ [Full story](#)

Public, start your engines

“Charities are facing an up-hill battle to persuade the public to engage in the political process on their behalf.”

– NFP Synergy survey results

The UK research consultancy NFP Synergy finds UK charities are struggling with a disengaged public.

→ [Full story](#)

Lifeline for drug and alcohol services

“Extending funding for another 12 months will provide clarity and certainty for organisations in the alcohol and other drug sector while longer term plans are developed.”

– Fiona Nash

The Federal Assistant Minister for Health announces \$87 million of bridging funding for around 160 drug and alcohol treatment organisations.

→ [Full story](#)

(Almost) freebies



Connecting Up has added Skype credit vouchers to the list of tech-related cheapies and freebies available to eligible not-for-profits. Vouchers to the value of \$20 each can be purchased for \$1 and used for calls to mobiles, landlines and more.

Go to www.connectingup.org/donations/microsoft/20-skype-credit-voucher.

The Numbers Game: ACNC Blacklist Analysis

Before the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) came into being in 2012, all you had to do to be a charity was to become registered with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Once you'd done that, you were in the clear, even if you never communicated with the ATO again. You had no reporting responsibilities, so the ATO had no reason to check on you – and it didn't.

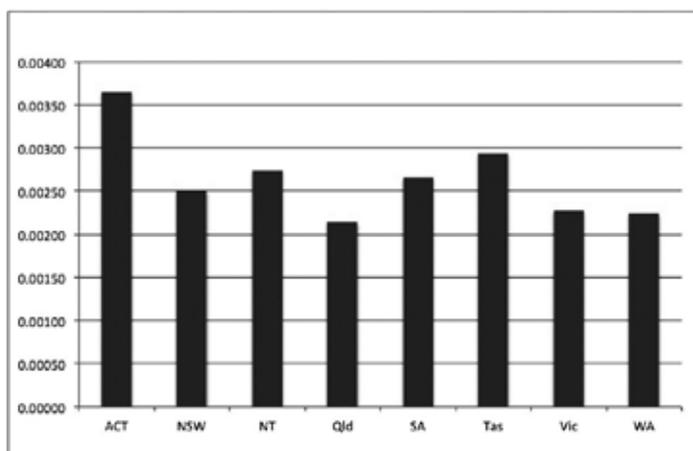
Anybody who's had anything to do with not-for-profits knows that there's quite a lot of turnover. Organisations are created, grow, shrink and die as needs change, people age, and funding swings. Most end not with a bang but with a whimper, slipping into suspended animation as it becomes impossible to get a quorum or to persuade anybody to stand for election, while the bank account dwindles towards zero.

In these circumstances, there's often nobody around to turn off the lights – to formally go out of business, distribute any remaining assets, and notify the regulator. All of which meant that a charity once listed with the ATO tended to stay listed well into its afterlife.

The ACNC, however, does ask charities to do something. Charities have to fill out a simple form every year. If you don't, and if you keep on not filling it out for several years, the ACNC will delist you. The Australian Axeman's Hall Of Fame, the Penguin History Group, Greyhound Haven Tasmania – all these, and thousands of others, are now one with Nineveh and Tyre, gradually disappearing footprints in the sands of time.

The ACNC has already delisted about 4,000 apparently defunct organisations because they failed for two years in a row to fill out that form. And it's looking at another 7,000. That's 11,000 out of 59,000, a cut of about 18%, leaving only about 48,000. It's becoming clear that the number of organisations that crash, fade away or implode is much larger than we thought.

The goodness index: Number of charities per head of population



The ACT is particularly engaged. Queensland, not so much.

Number of charities struck off in the last round

ACT	50
NSW	505
NT	15
Qld	260
SA	180
Tas	30
Vic	170
WA	190

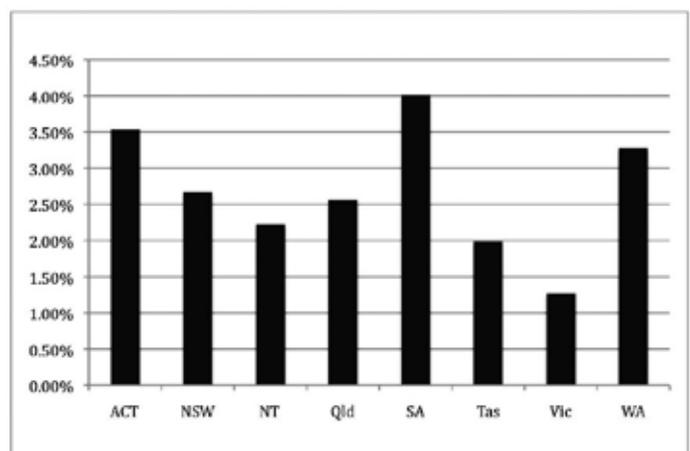
Source: ACNC

The NFPs that vanish when you look at them tend to be the smaller ones, with few staff and little money. Their disappearance isn't going to make much of a dint in Tax Office estimates of economic activity in the sector, which at the last count found some 41,000 bodies large enough to have paid staff, but it does have a bearing on any calculation of how active Australians are in their communities.

Bear in mind that those numbers refer to charities. The total number of not-for-profit organisations in Australia, including unincorporated associations, which don't have to be registered with anyone, has been estimated at 600,000 – but that's the product of a fair bit of guessing. If we extrapolate from the charity death rate of 18%, then the total population of not-for-profits is smaller. That 600,000 could be closer to 500,000 not-for-profit organisations – one for every 47 Australians, not one for every 38.

For the full list of charities facing deregistration, go to acnc.gov.au/doubledefaulters.

The badness index: Percentage of charities struck off the charity register*



Victoria is relatively virtuous. South Australia is rather recalcitrant.

*Struck off for failing to file information statements two years running.

Ticks for health, education: 2015 Social Progress Index

The 2015 Social Progress Index shows Australia ranks in the top 10 countries globally for overall social progress, with particular strengths in health and wellness, personal rights, and access to advanced education, and weaknesses in shelter, access to basic knowledge, and ecosystem sustainability.

The index measures strengths and weaknesses relative to the 15 countries whose GDP per capita is most similar to Australia's.

It is produced by the US-based not-for-profit Social Progress Imperative, using methodology developed under the leadership of Professor Michael Porter of Harvard Business School.

The Social Progress Index uses exclusively social and environmental indicators, unlike purely economic indices, such as GDP measurements, or indices that combine economic indicators and social indicators, such as the UN

Human Development Index and the OECD Better Life Index (featured in *Our Community Matters* in August 2014).

"Our aim is to measure social progress directly, rather than utilize economic proxies," the report says. "By excluding economic indicators, we can, for the first time, rigorously and systematically analyze the relationship between economic development (measured for example by GDP per capita) and social development."

Another of the index's key design principles is that it measures outcomes, not inputs. "For example, we want to measure a country's health and wellness achieved, not how much effort is expended nor how much the country spends on healthcare," the report says.

The Social Progress Index provides invaluable information for policy makers, grant applicants and grantmakers – not only in its content, but also in its methodology. Read it at www.socialprogressimperative.org/publications.

**1 in 5 adults
aren't online***

Join Go Digi, a national digital literacy program.

Go Digi is a joint initiative of Australia Post and Infoxchange, aiming to improve the online confidence and skills of 300,000 Australians.



Become a Go Digi Network Partner today and gain access to a range of free resources, free event listings and an opportunity to connect with other community focused organisations.

To find out more or sign up head to godigi.org.au/partner or email us at hello@godigi.org.au



www.godigi.org.au

*Campbell, S, Mason, C, Griffith, C, et al. Broadband Impact and Challenges: realising the benefits from the digital economy Australian Centre for Broadband Innovation, CSIRO EPI31221

Better data key to success of competition policy in human services: report

You're trying to choose an aged-care facility for your elderly mother. Or you want to book daycare for your two-year-old, or find the best hospital in your area for your knee reconstruction. How do you choose between services? Do you even have the luxury of a choice?

Or you're on the board of a church-run nursing home, or a childcare centre, or a hospital. How do you measure your facility's outcomes? What do you measure?

The final report of the Federal Government's Competition Policy Review panel, also known as the Harper review, says users of human services should have access to "objective, outcomes-based data on available services" to enable them to choose between competing services.

That's a heads-up, then, that if you're not already defining and measuring outcomes – as distinct from inputs or outputs or the number of meals you serve or the number of patients you treat – then you should get on the case.

The competition policy report argues that by levelling the playing field for the provision of human services, governments can bring about greater competition among service providers, and that benefits to users – aged-care-home residents, parents and children, patients and so on – will follow.

Commentator Dr Tim Senior, [writing for Crikey](#), has previously questioned the evidence for the case that more competition means better outcomes. "[Maximising competition] is fine if competition is the end you are trying to achieve. But what if a healthy population is what you are trying to achieve?" he wrote. "And, God forbid, what if you wanted to use some evidence to try and answer that question?"

The report cautions that "governments commissioning human services should do so carefully, with a clear focus on outcomes."

The full report is available at http://competitionpolicyreview.gov.au/files/2015/03/Competition-policy-review-report_online.pdf.

Innovation in action: National Health Cooperative

At the National Health Cooperative's five clinics in Canberra, members pay a membership fee of \$10 a month or \$100 a year in return for access to bulk-billed GP visits and a range of other health services. Any surplus funds are re-invested in the practice.

It's the kind of innovative approach to delivering health care and other human services that the Harper Review wants to encourage: "innovation in service provision should be stimulated while ensuring access to high-quality human services," the report says.

The deputy chair of the co-op, Blake Wilson, told ABC Radio National's *Saturday Extra* program that any community can establish such a co-op – if it has enough committed, skilled hard-working people to do so.

Listen to Wilson and Harper Review panel member Su McCluskey discuss the report's Human Services chapter online: www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/saturdayextra/public-sector-third-way/6395598.

The Harper review's recommendations on human services

Each Australian government should adopt choice and competition principles in the domain of human services. Guiding principles should include:

- User choice should be placed at the heart of service delivery.
- Governments should retain a stewardship function, separating the interests of policy (including funding), regulation and service delivery.
- Governments commissioning human services should do so carefully, with a clear focus on outcomes.
- A diversity of providers should be encouraged, while taking care not to crowd out community and volunteer services.
- Innovation in service provision should be stimulated, while ensuring minimum standards of quality and access in human services

Source: *Competition Policy Review: Final Report*, Page 224: http://competitionpolicyreview.gov.au/files/2015/03/Competition-policy-review-report_online.pdf.

How to measure what matters

By Amanda Nuttall and Suzi Young, Think Impact

Federal Assistant Treasurer Josh Frydenberg thinks it's all too hard.

Speaking at a recent Community Council for Australia forum, Mr Frydenberg **acknowledged** the significant work of the not-for-profit sector, but said, "I don't think you'll ever put a number on the benefits that flow from philanthropy and the not-for-profit sector..."

It's true that many things that have value are not captured in traditional metrics. But Frydenberg is wrong to say that non-monetary benefits can't be measured.

Yes, it is complex. Yes, it is hard. It is also rewarding, fun and absolutely necessary if we are going to invest in a community that we want to live in.

Traditional measures of a country's wealth and prosperity, such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), are grossly inadequate when it comes to measuring the wealth

and prosperity of people and communities. GDP growth due to greater spending on anti-terrorism measures or domestic violence services, for example, is not an indicator of a safe and prosperous society. Rather, it is a reflection of an unsafe one.

If we fail to "put a number on the benefits that flow", we are essentially valuing those benefits at zero. Yet we can measure benefits that change lives: housing the homeless, improving financial literacy, strengthening relationships, improving health, protecting endangered wildlife.

A number of tools currently in use all over the world enable sector organisations to put a value on the positive change they are creating in communities. Social Return on Investment (SROI) is just one of the analytical tools used to measure and account for a much broader concept of value than just dollar

signs, taking into account social, economic and environmental factors. SROI methodology is a way for social and environmental outcomes to be monetised, thus enabling more responsible investment decisions and improving program design and delivery.

Mr Frydenberg – take note.

Think Impact is a consultancy specialising in social impact, sustainability and responsible business. Want to learn more about measuring social and environmental outcomes? Think Impact, in conjunction with Our Community, next month presents new training on measurement methodologies. It'll be practical, engaging and fun. For full details of the course, to be presented in Melbourne (June 29), Brisbane (June 30) and Sydney (July 1), go to www.ourcommunity.com.au/training/calendar.form.

Not-for-Profit Treasurers' Awards provide wisdom and inspiration

Nominations for the 2015 Not-for-Profit Treasurers' Awards have closed with more than 1100 nominations received.

These awards emphasise how much work is done behind the scenes of our not-for-profit organisations, highlight barriers to the efficient and effective keeping of the books, and unearth solutions for overcoming those barriers.

The judging of the awards made for exciting reading. We heard of treasurers taking their groups from the red to the black, from the dark ages to the internet age, from struggling to thriving.

We also read many excellent suggestions of initiatives that Our Community and Commonwealth Bank can undertake that will make

treasurers' lives across Australia easier – and their groups safer, more effective, more efficient.

This is gold. For the first time we've heard from the horse's mouth exactly what impediments are standing in the way of our nation's treasurers, and exactly what can be done to remove them.

Around 880 treasurers were nominated to receive an official 2015 Not-for-Profit Treasurers' Awards Certificate of Appreciation – it's our way (and every nominator's way) of letting these volunteers know how treasured they are. Certificates will be dispatched in a few weeks.

In addition, hundreds of treasurers entered the second section of the awards, where they were invited

to provide their ideas for removing barriers to the role of the treasurer. The three best entries will each win a \$5000 donation for their not-for-profit group, plus an iPad for themselves.

The winners will be announced at a special ceremony in Sydney on May 14 as part of **Not-for-Profit Finance Week**.



CommonwealthBank 

Equality on Boards: Are we there yet?

By Patrick Moriarty, Director, Our Community



Traditionally, the way you find out that a government is losing a civil war is that its triumphant victories move closer and closer to the capital every day. In much the same way, the arguments against imposing quotas for women on commercial boards are shifting steadily towards eventual capitulation.

The issue has recently been brought into the limelight by the Victorian Government's decision to ensure that half of all appointees to government boards and the judiciary are women. "I'm sick of walking into meetings and seeing a room full of blokes sitting around the table," Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews said when he announced the decision.

The facts of male predominance on Australian boards being utterly unarguable, the defence had always been that men are just better at this kind of thing than women, bless their hearts, and were promoted purely on merit, and so any change would affect company profits for the worse.

As Jane Caro has pointed out, anybody who truly believes that executives are promoted on merit has only to look at the men who are actually filling those positions to be thoroughly disabused.

But you don't have to take Jane's word for it. Pretty much anyone who's looked at the data has found that companies with a higher proportion of women on the board have better financial outcomes than those that don't. As more and more evidence of this type has come to light, the old boys' club has had to change either its practices or its arguments.

Tough call.

The new arguments are that:

- Correlation isn't causation, and those better women-friendly outcomes could simply be an amazing coincidence;
- Even if women are equally competent, there simply aren't enough of them with the necessary experience; and
- The rational actor theory of economics says that it's impossible for a business culture to be prejudiced for long. If it was in fact rational to hire more women, then some new company would have sprung up to do it and would have already driven the old ones out of business by being more efficient. So, by remorseless logic, whatever is, is right.

The answers to these new arguments are, in order:

Correlation isn't always causation, but that's the way to bet. I invite anybody who disagrees to accept a place in a small correlation/causation experiment I'm setting up over the spring racing season, where I bet on every favourite and they bet on every long shot, and the one with the most wins gets a million dollars.

Actually, experience on a board seems to be important only if you are a woman; 80% of men appointed to ASX200 Boards have no previous board experience at all.

The rational actor theory of economics is a load of old cobblers (and is largely responsible for having brought us the GFC).

The purpose of all these arguments, of course, is to stall progress towards the kind of enforceable proportions already in place in Belgium, Brazil, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, and Spain, and as long as we're debating they're winning.

The principle is clear. The evidence is in. Let's just do it.

Happy anniversary, privacy laws

March 2014 saw the introduction of amendments to the Privacy Act that changed the way organisations must secure personal information. One year on, Cecelia Irvine-So from Moores asks: how compliant is your organisation now?

The new privacy laws introduced last year placed tougher obligations on affected not-for-profits, and the penalties for non-compliance can make the whole business seem rather scary. There are fines of up to \$1.7 million for a single breach, the possibility of court injunctions, and a 360-page piece of legislation to consider. Not many not-for-profits can afford to take a \$1.7 million sting and blithely carry on.

Businesses and not-for-profit organisations with an annual turnover of \$3 million or more are affected by the new laws. Public schools and universities are exempted, however, even if their turnover exceeds this figure. But health service providers are required to comply regardless of their turnover.

If your organisation handles personal information – which can include information as seemingly innocuous as a list of your members' names and addresses – and is subject to the new laws, you should check your compliance.

Here's a list of quick questions to pose to your board. If the answer to any of these questions is "no", you're risking a privacy breach and leaving yourself liable to penalties, not to mention reputational damage:

1. Do you have appropriate practices, procedures and systems in place to secure personal information?
2. Do you continually assess your personal information security risks?
3. Do you take appropriate steps to protect personal information?
4. Do you destroy or de-identify personal information that you no longer need?

If you are unsure of any of the above, help is at hand. The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner has just released a valuable resource titled [Guide to Securing Personal Information](#). The guide provides a far more accessible description of your responsibilities when securing personal information than the Act does, and it's recommended reading for all organisations.

If after reading the guide you realise you need additional staff training or even a complete overhaul of your privacy standards and procedures, seek legal help.



Readership survey: tell us what you think

Take our readership survey and go into the draw to WIN an all-expenses-paid trip to a parallel universe, flying first class with Unicorn Intergalactic Airlines!

At least that's what we'd like to be able to tell you.

But there are no prizes on offer for answering 14 quick questions about *Our Community Matters* over at [Survey Monkey](#) – just our gratitude to you, dear reader, for your kindness and generosity.

And kittens.



Please tell us what you like about *Our Community Matters*, what makes you itchy, and what we should do differently. We'll do our very, very best to take your suggestions on board.

The survey closes on Wednesday June 10.

We're all ears. The kittens thank you. Purrrrrrrrrrr.



The Community-Centric Fundraising Model ♥

Blogger Vu Le is the Seattle-based executive director of [Rainier Valley Corps](#). In a recent [blog post](#), he proposed an evolution of the donor-centric fundraising model. He calls it the community-centric fundraising model.

For too long, we nonprofits have been siloed from one another. While all of us do different things and play different roles, there is one thing that binds all of us together: Community. We have different missions, but every single one links back to this one, the Prime Mission: To build a stronger, safer, happier community that we all can live in, where we want our kids to grow up in, where we can all grow old and die peacefully in. Donors, funders, volunteers, staff, board, businesses, we all belong to this community and have a stake in it and a responsibility to it. Which is why, even though my current work focuses on building leadership among communities of color, I am deeply thankful for the work that my colleagues do in areas of homelessness, art, food justice, employment, senior care, environmental justice, culture, LGBTQ, racism, disability, child protection, domestic violence, human trafficking, transportation access, animal rescue, etc. We cannot have a strong community unless ALL of these things are addressed.

Honestly, I feel that in our quest to make our donors feel good so that they will keep giving, we often

underestimate them. We separate them out from the community that they are in, and we reinforce the dichotomy of donors as the benefactors helping “other” people, and we make them feel “warm and fuzzy” for doing it. I don’t think we focus enough on getting them to see the bigger vision, a vision that extends beyond our own organization. And by not getting other people to see this bigger vision, we simultaneously prevent ourselves from seeing it. To tackle the increasing challenges in our society, we nonprofits must think beyond our own individual org’s survival, and think of the entire community, and get everyone else to do the same.

With that in mind, I think we should take the best elements of the donor-centric model, and evolve it into the community-centric model. I think donors want to be neither ATMs nor royalty to be catered to. I think that most would like to be equal partners in the work toward creating an awesome community that they are a part of. If the donor-centric model puts donors in the center, the Community-Centric model focuses on the community as the most important element of our work.

Read the full text of Vu Le’s post here: <http://nonprofitwithballs.com/2015/04/winter-is-coming-and-the-donor-centric-fundraising-model-must-evolve/>.

Co-ops and mutuals inquiry: deadline extended

The Senate has extended the deadline for submissions to an inquiry into co-ops and mutuals until July 1.

The Economics Reference Committee will consider the role, importance, performance and operations of cooperative, mutual and member-owned firms in the Australian economy.

The committee is due to report by November 30.

To make a submission, go to www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Economics/Cooperatives/Terms_of_Reference.

Our Community named among world's best businesses for community impact

Our Community has just been recognised as one of the best businesses in the world for community impact.

The business was awarded "Best for Community Impact" by the American organisation B Lab, scoring in the top 10% of B Lab-certified benefit corporations worldwide in the community impact category.

B Lab is a Philadelphia-based not-for-profit that oversees certification of benefit corporations ("B Corps"), businesses that meet rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency.

The Best for Community Impact list is compiled by B Lab annually and is drawn from around 1200 certified B Corps ranging across more than 120 industries.

Other 2015 Best For Community Impact honourees include Roshan, Afghanistan's leading telecommunications company; Beneficial State Bank, an innovative triple-bottom line community development bank based in California; Echale a Tu Casa, a Mexican social housing construction company, and A to Z Wineworks in Oregon.

B Lab simultaneously released separate lists honouring the companies that are "Best for the World" (overall impact), "Best for the Environment" (environmental impact), and "Best for Workers" (employee impact).

The full list can be found at bestfortheworld.bcorporation.net.

Our Community has long led Australia in providing a model for socially minded businesses, and became a Certified B Corp in December 2014.

The organisation operates under a cross-subsidisation model, aiming to reach as many organisations as possible with products and services that both fill a need and create social impact.

Paid products and services (newsletters, books, training, SmartyGrants subscriptions, jobs listings) subsidise free or reduced-cost ones (the commission-free GiveNow online donations service, the free Policy Bank and the free Board Matching Service, for example) that may otherwise be unaffordable to the organisations that are doing the most to build stronger communities.

"We do some things for profit, and some things for purpose, but most things fit with both aims. Everything we do must fit with our mission – to build stronger communities," founder and group managing director Denis Moriarty said. "We're extremely proud to have our social impact recognised through this important listing."

"The honourees inspire all companies to compete not only to be best in the world, but best for the world," said B Lab co-founder Jay Coen Gilbert. "We hope many will take the first step by using the B Impact Assessment to measure and manage their impact with as much rigor as their profit."



Australian Institute of Grants Management website – now with added additives

Have you checked out the new-look, improved Australian Institute of Grants Management (AIGM) website yet?

The website (www.aigm.com.au) features an ever-expanding library of practical grantmaking resources and tools, as well as constantly updated news and views from around the grantmaking world. It's a one-stop shop where funders and grantmakers can stay informed, and where grantseekers can gain insights into the people who give out the money.

For grantmakers, we've launched a new 10-user AIGM membership option. To join or find out more, visit www.aigm.com.au/join.

The AIGM is part of the Our Community group of enterprises.

Disadvantaged schools eligible for tax-deductible donations via new channel

Schools, by and large, are not eligible for deductible gift recipient (DGR) status in their own right. As a result, schools often establish DGR funds for specific purposes, such as buildings, libraries, scholarships and so forth.

Now there's a new organisation helping schools attract tax-deductible donations for particular projects or programs.

Australian Schools Plus is a conduit organisation. Its DGR status means it can receive donations on a tax-deductible basis and distribute them to eligible schools.

Eligible schools are those with an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value below 1000, whether public or private. (The ICSEA was developed for the **My School** website and takes into account the socio-economic characteristics of the school's area, the occupation and education level of parents, and the proportion of students from non-English speaking or indigenous backgrounds.)

Here's how it works:

1. Schools register their projects with Australian Schools Plus (subject to satisfying eligibility criteria)
2. Donors can donate online by selecting a specific school or project, and receive a tax-deductible receipt for gifts over \$2.

3. Australian Schools Plus channels the funds to the relevant school, minus an administrative fee.

For more information, go to www.schoolsplus.org.au.

This article was first published by Moores, the not-for-profit experts.



Electronic super processing: are you on track?

From 1 July 2015, organisations with 20 or more employees will be legally required to remit and pay superannuation electronically in a mandated format.

With the deadline less than two months away, now's the time to fast-track your organisation's SuperStream implementation plan.

HESTA (an Our Community alliance partner) provides a SuperStream-compliant clearing house solution to not-for-profit organisations.

QuickSuper – a customised version of Westpac's clearing house – meets the government's SuperStream requirements and is free for HESTA employers.

QuickSuper makes super administration:

- efficient – it's a simple, secure payment solution for single-file processing.

- reliable – fewer lost and duplicate accounts with electronic data records.

Find out more about SuperStream and your payment options with HESTA at hesta.com.au/superstream.



UPSKILL: Upcoming Training and Events

Diploma of Business (Governance)

The Diploma of Business (Governance), Australia's only diploma-level governance qualification, is designed specifically for existing and prospective not-for-profit board or committee members and the CEOs and senior staff who work alongside them. Check out the course start dates below and then [enrol here](#).

In Perth or Darwin? Enrol today, start next fortnight, and start reaping the benefits straight away.

Perth	18 May
Darwin	18 May
Brisbane	1 June
Sydney	15 June
Melbourne	15 June
Canberra	22 June

Introduction to Writing Winning Grant Applications

Got questions about how to win funding from grantmakers? We've got answers. Sign up now for this half-day seminar.

Brisbane	15 May
Perth	22 May
Sydney	19 June
Melbourne	19 June
Brisbane	3 July

Secrets of Successful Boards Seminar

What are the secrets of successful boards? You'll leave this one-day seminar with a better understanding of your legal and practical responsibilities as a committee or board member, and top ideas for creating a more harmonious, more productive and more effective working group.

Brisbane	14 May
Perth	21 May
Brisbane	4 June
Sydney	18 June
Melbourne	18 June
Brisbane	2 July

Strategies for Sustainable Funding Seminar

At this half-day seminar for volunteers, staff and fundraiser, learn how donations, community-business partnerships, alumni and membership sources and special events can build a sustainable future for your group. The key word here is "sustainable" – it's all about thinking beyond grants.

Brisbane	15 May
Perth	22 May
Sydney	19 June
Melbourne	19 June
Brisbane	3 July

Give, get or get off: workshops

For American board members, contributing financially – in no small way – to the organisations they serve is virtually non-negotiable. Some boards even prescribe an annual "minimum give" amount. A series of new workshops presented by Philanthropy Australia over the next four weeks looks at how Australian boards can cultivate their own culture of "give, get or get off". Each three-hour workshop will cover:

- The latest trends in private giving and impact investment
- How to get the most from "new generation" board members
- Educating your board about major gift fundraising
- Strategies for deciding how much and when to spend on fundraising resources
- Tips on engaging board members to improve fundraising outcomes
- "In conversation" case studies with chairs and CEOs of two best-practice not-for-profit organisations.

Presented by Philanthropy Australia's Queensland chair, Fiona Maxwell, the event is aimed at board members, CEOs and senior managers from small, medium and large not-for-profits. The cost is \$280 for Philanthropy Australia members and associates and \$390 for non-members.

Book now to attend the workshop in Sydney (Wednesday May 20), Brisbane (Wednesday May 27), Adelaide (Wednesday June 3) or Melbourne (Thursday June 4): www.philanthropy.org.au/events/professional-development.

Fulbright Scholarship Opportunity

Applications are now open for the annual Fulbright Professional Scholarship in Non-Profit Leadership. Consider applying for this opportunity to spend three to four months in the United States working on a project of your choice. The scholarship, valued at \$40,000, provides an exceptional opportunity for personal and professional development and broader impact through research or experiential learning at an approved US institution or charitable organisation.

[Apply here.](#)



KNOWLEDGE, CONNECTIONS, CREDENTIALS

Australia's only diploma-level governance qualification is within reach!

NOW'S THE TIME TO ENROL for the acclaimed Diploma of Business (Governance), which we'll deliver locally in the following regions:

- > **Darwin:** Commencing May 18
- > **Perth:** Commencing May 18
- > **Brisbane:** Commencing June 1
- > **Sydney:** Commencing June 15
- > **Melbourne:** Commencing June 15
- > **Canberra:** Commencing June 22

Affordable, practical and outcome focused, the Diploma of Business (Governance) is designed specifically for **not-for-profit board and committee members**, and the staff who work alongside them.

Act now and get the recognition you deserve:

www.communitydirectors.com.au/diploma

The tools you'll need, from day one

You'll benefit from our expert teachers in the classroom and from a suite of tools that will support your learning throughout your studies.

Students receive an iPad mini (pre-loaded with course materials and yours to keep post-study) as well as 12-month access to our extensive online resource centre, policy bank, governance help sheets and regular newsletters.



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR: What's on in the NFP Sector



Ramadan

June 18–July 17

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. Every day during this month, Muslims around the world spend the daylight hours in a complete fast.



Red Shield Appeal Door-knock May 30–31

Each year The Salvation Army provides assistance to over one million Australians. You can get involved in the annual Red Shield Appeal by becoming a volunteer collector, or giving money to the door-knockers or the online Red Shield donations campaign.

Publicise Your Event

To add your national event to GiveNow's What's On Calendar, email your information to service@ourcommunity.com.au. We'll publish the details [online](#), and we'll also select a number of events to publicise in *Our Community Matters*.

GiveNow's online [What's On Calendar](#) features nationally significant events that centre on major community, advocacy and awareness issues in Australia. Events taking place in the next two months include:



Mindful in May May 1–31

Mindful in May brings the benefits of meditation together with an opportunity to help bring clean water to those living in the developing world. Your donation and fundraising will be used by Charity Water in its mission to solve the water crisis. When you register and donate, you'll receive a one-month meditation program.



Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month May 1–31 Promoting the message that domestic and family violence will not be tolerated in our communities.



Mother's Day Classic May 10

Join a fun-walk or fun-run in your community and help raise money for breast cancer research.



Not-for-Profit Finance Week May 11–17

A celebration of ideas, knowledge and financial capacity building for the \$100 billion Australian not-for-profit sector. This event acts to increase the profile of the not-for-profit sector, bolster the financial capacity and sustainability of the sector, track new and emerging financial needs of the sector and provide support for the staff, board members and treasurers carrying out the important task of overseeing the finances.



National Volunteer Week May 11–17

The largest celebration of volunteers and volunteerism in Australia provides an opportunity to highlight the role of volunteers in our communities and to say thank you to the more than six million Australians who volunteer.



National Palliative Care Week May 24–30

Palliative care is about living well at the end of life. Palliative Care Week raises awareness of an issue that will affect all of us at some point in our lives, whether as a patient, carer, family member, neighbour or friend.



Communities in Control conference May 25–26

Australia's most inspiring social movement – the biggest and best annual not-for-profit sector gathering. Read more on page 4.



National Reconciliation Week May 27–June 3

The dates that book-end National Reconciliation Week commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey: the anniversary of the successful 1967 referendum, and the anniversary of the High Court's Mabo decision. The week is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures and achievements and to explore how each of us can join the national reconciliation effort.

BOARD MATCHING SERVICE

The board vacancies below are just a small sample of what's currently listed on the Institute of Community Directors Australia website: www.communitydirectors.com.au/icda/board/.

Looking for talented people to contribute to your board or committee? The Institute of Community Directors Australia can promote your vacancy for free to a targeted audience of skilled professionals. Learn more about listing your vacancy: www.communitydirectors.com.au/icda/board/.

Queensland

[Noah's Ark Queensland](#)

Noah's Ark provides specialist education services for children with special needs or disabilities. Noah's Ark meets in Brisbane and is looking for a general board member.

South Australia

[Native Orchid Society of South Australia](#)

The Native Orchid Society of South Australia promotes the conservation of Australian native orchids through cultivation and the preservation of naturally occurring orchids and natural habitat. In Australia, all native orchids are protected, and collecting plant material without a permit is illegal.

The society meets in Adelaide and is seeking a treasurer with experience in accounting, banking and finance.

Victoria

[Multiple Birth Volunteer Support](#)

Multiple Birth Volunteer Support aims to strengthen the health and wellbeing of multiple birth families and has a particular focus on those with triplets and quads. It provides an information and referral service and "hands-on" help in the home.

The organisation seeks general committee members, and is particularly looking for someone with marketing and communications experience, having identified this as a gap in the skill set of current committee members.

The organisation meets in Melbourne.

Western Australia

[Upside Nepal \(Perth\)](#)

Upside Australia supports the growth of village-level enterprises in Nepal which contribute profits to local health and education initiatives. Upside seeks to appoint to the board a director who wants to apply her or his commercial experience to the next phase of its development. An interest in and understanding of issues in international aid and development, and some experience in a developing country, will be seen as helpful but not essential.

Upside Nepal meets in Perth.

[View all board vacancies](#)

GOOD MOVES: Not-for-profit jobs

If you need to fill a community or non-profit sector role, you need to consider listing your job in Good Moves. For just \$30, your opportunity will be seen online and in print by tens of thousands of Our Community members and supporters and, quite likely, the right person for the job. Post a vacancy here: www.ourcommunity.com.au/jobs/create_vacancy.form.

New South Wales

[Fundraising and Marketing Coordinator](#)
(part-time; flexible 21 hours), ADDults with ADHD

Queensland

[Queensland manager](#)
Philanthropy Australia

Victoria

[Fundraising manager](#)
RSPCA Victoria

[Community support coordinator](#)
Down Syndrome Victoria

[Marketing communications coordinator](#)
Deakin University Student Association

You can browse all job vacancies here:
www.ourcommunity.com.au/jobs/list_all_jobs.form.

Think **Differently**: Ideas that change communities

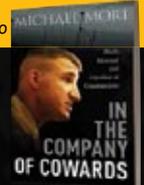
Communities in Control | Melbourne, May 25 & 26, 2015
www.ourcommunity.com.au/cic2015



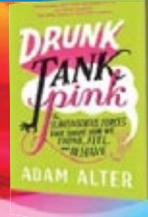
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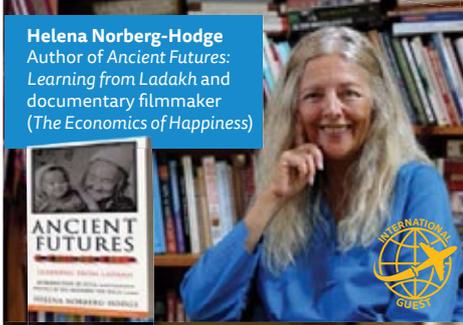
Lieutenant Colonel USMC (Retired) Dan Mori
Author of *In the Company of Cowards: Bush, Howard and Injustice at Guantanamo*



Assoc. Prof Adam Alter
Author of New York Times Bestseller *Drunk Tank Pink*



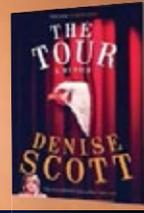
Clementine Ford
Contributor to *Destroying the Joint* - Why women have to change the world



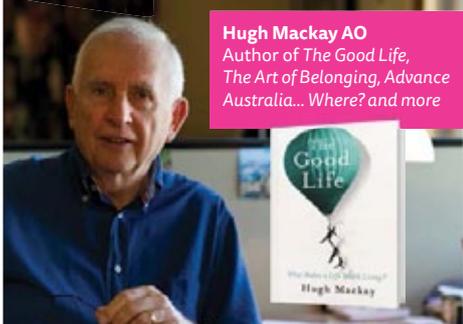
Helena Norberg-Hodge
Author of *Ancient Futures: Learning from Ladakh* and documentary filmmaker (*The Economics of Happiness*)



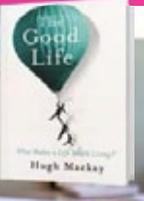
Denise Scott
Author of *All That Happened At Number 26* and *The Tour*



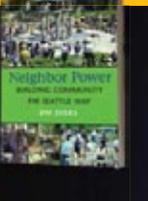
Virginia Trioli
Author, television presenter, multi-award winning journalist



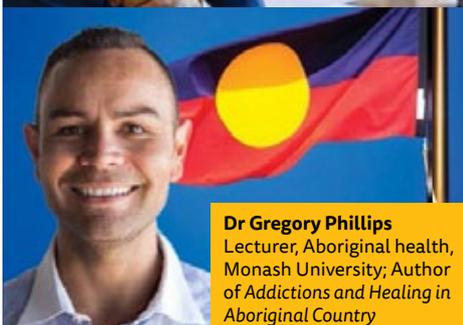
Hugh Mackay AO
Author of *The Good Life*, *The Art of Belonging*, *Advance Australia... Where? and more*



Dr Jim Diers
Author of *Neighbor Power: Building Community the Seattle Way*



Christine Anu
Singer/Songwriter



Dr Gregory Phillips
Lecturer, Aboriginal health, Monash University; Author of *Addictions and Healing in Aboriginal Country*



Barnaby Howarth
Filmmaker, survivor, fighter, motivational speaker

Join some of the brightest minds and thought leaders from around the globe, and see what it means to **Think Differently**.
Communities in Control
Melbourne, May 25-26, 2015



ourcommunity.com.au
Where not-for-profits go for help

- **Fast Forward:** Please feel free to send this newsletter on to other not-for-profit groups you think might benefit from it.
- **Sign up:** Sign up to receive your own copy of *Our Community Matters* at www.ourcommunity.com.au/signup.
It's free!
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